

# **Qualitative Case Review**

## **Eastern Region**

**Fiscal Year 2003**

### ***Preliminary Results***

**Office of Services Review**

**July 2003**

## Executive Summary

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- 24 cases were reviewed for the Eastern Region Qualitative Case Review conducted in May 2003.
- **The overall Child Status score was 95.8%; this meets the exit requirement of 85%. The overall score for System Performance improved over last year with 70.8% acceptable cases, though the score does not meet the exit requirement set at 85%.** (All results are preliminary until all case stories have been received.)
- “Appropriateness of Placement” and “Caregiver Functioning” was acceptable on all cases (100%).
- Caregiver Support (90%), Safety (95.8%), Health/Physical Well-being (95.8%), and Satisfaction (95.8%) all scored very well this year, above the 85% criteria. Three of the six core indicators, “Child and Family Teaming/Coordination”, “Plan Implementation” and “Tracking and Adaptation” all exceeded the 70% mark for exit criteria. In addition, “Long-term View” made a dramatic increase from 25% last year to 50% this year.
- While there were as many indicators in System Performance that decreased as there were that increased, those that decreased were only by a minimal amount. More pronounced decreases were found in Child Status however. “Stability” dropped from 79% to 67%, Permanence dropped from 71% to 54% and “Family Functioning” dropped from 67% to 50%.
- Despite high turnover in the Castle Dale office, all of Castle Dale’s cases passed System Performance for two years in a row. In addition, the Roosevelt and Monticello offices achieved 100% acceptable System Performance on their cases. Finally, the Ute Family Services office had 2 of 3 cases (67%) pass System Performance this year, a great improvement from last year’s 1 of 5 cases (20%).
- In System Performance, there are fewer “partially unacceptable” (3s) and “minimally acceptable” (4s) and more “substantially acceptable” (5s) and “optimal” (6s) scores when compared to last year.
- There is virtually no difference in foster care scores and home-based scores. However, there is a weakness in reunification. Four of the seven cases (57%) with a goal of “Return Home” had acceptable results. Whereas, the other permanency goals scored no less than 67%. Also, cases open 0-6 months (50%) or where the child is between 6 and 12 years old (54%) are much less likely to be acceptable in System Performance.
- Five of 24 cases had workers with less than one year of work experience. These cases with new workers scored acceptably only 60% of the time while 74% of cases with workers who had over one year experience scored acceptably. On the other side, however, only three of the 24 cases reviewed had workers with a caseload greater than 17. We saw little difference in the effect of caseload on the scoring, with those below 17 cases passing System Performance 71% of the time and those with more than 17 cases passing 67% of the time.

## Methodology

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The Qualitative Case Review was held the week of May 12-16, 2003. Twenty-four open DCFS cases in the Eastern Region were selected and scored. Certified reviewers from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWPPG), the Office of Services Review (OSR), and the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), as well as first time reviewers from DCFS and outside stakeholders reviewed the cases. The cases were selected by CWPPG based on a sampling matrix assuring that a representative group of cases were reviewed. The sample included children in out-of-home care and families receiving home-based services, such as voluntary and protective supervision and intensive family preservation. Cases were selected to include offices throughout the region.

The information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents, or other guardians, foster parents (when placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. In addition, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations, and other available records were reviewed.

## Performance Tables

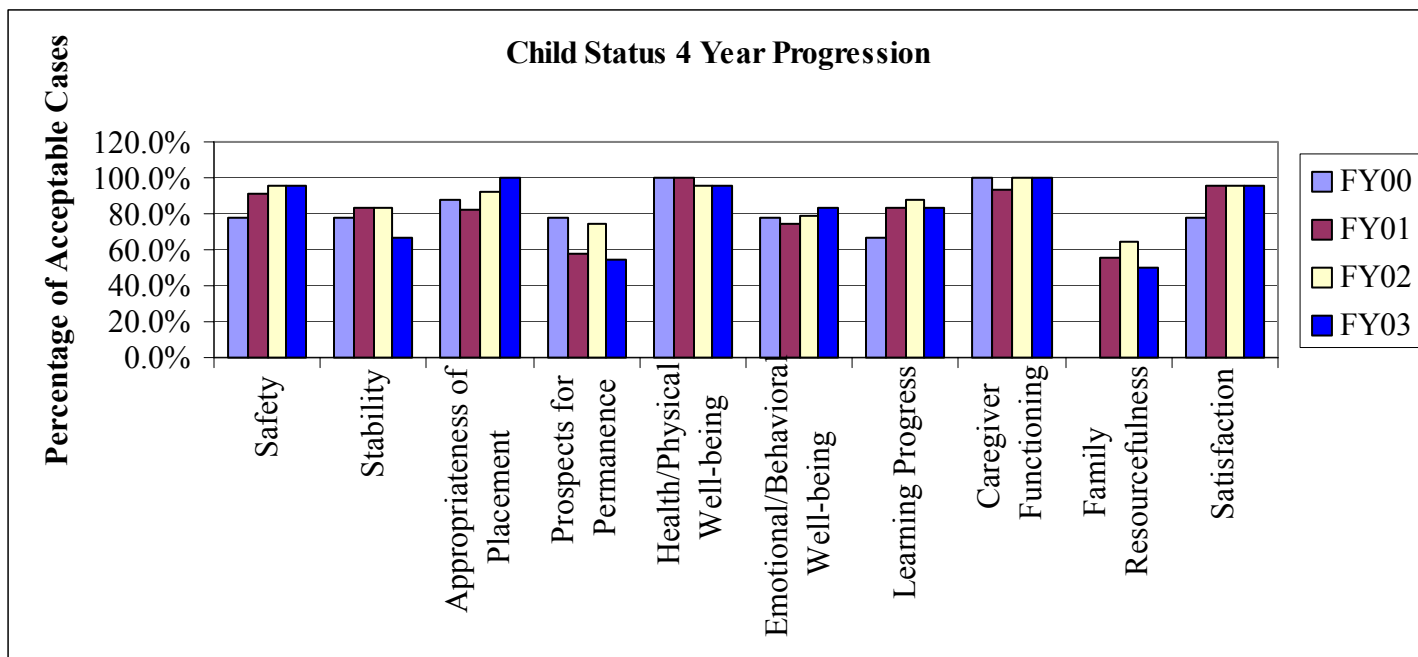
Preliminary data

The results in the following tables are based on the scores submitted at the end of the Eastern Region Review. They contain the scores of 24 cases. These results are preliminary and are subject to change until all reviewers have submitted their case stories.

Eastern Region Child Status								
		# of cases			FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
	# of cases	Needing			Baseline			Current
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score		Scores			Scores
Safety	23	1	95.8%	95.8%	77.8%	91.7%	95.8%	95.8%
Stability	16	8	66.7%	66.7%	77.8%	83.3%	79.2%	66.7%
Appropriateness of Placement	24	0	100.0%	100.0%	87.5%	82.6%	91.7%	100.0%
Prospects for Permanence	13	11	54.2%	54.2%	77.8%	58.3%	70.8%	54.2%
Health/Physical Well-being	23	1	95.8%	95.8%	100.0%	100.0%	95.8%	95.8%
Emotional/Behavioral Well-being	20	4	83.3%	83.3%	77.8%	75.0%	79.2%	83.3%
Learning Progress	20	4	83.3%	83.3%	66.7%	83.3%	87.5%	83.3%
Caregiver Functioning	20	0	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	92.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Family Resourcefulness	7	7	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	55.6%	66.7%	50.0%
Satisfaction	23	1	95.8%	95.8%	77.8%	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>77.8%</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>95.8%</b>
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%					

- 1) *This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable Child Status score. It is not an average of FY03 current scores.*

*Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change*



### **Statistical Analysis of Child Status Results:**

**The overall Child Status score was 95.8%, with all but one case reaching an acceptable level. This meets the exit requirement of 85%. One case failed on safety. The safety concerns were extensively discussed with region and office staff; the reviewer's concerns were addressed and acted upon.**

Two indicators reached 100%. Both "Appropriateness of Placement" and "Caregiver Functioning" (functioning of substitute caregivers, such as foster parents) achieved an acceptable rating in all cases reviewed. Despite limited resources, Eastern Region staff are doing a great job finding the best possible home or facility to meet the needs of the children and that these providers are well trained and capable of providing for the needs of the children.

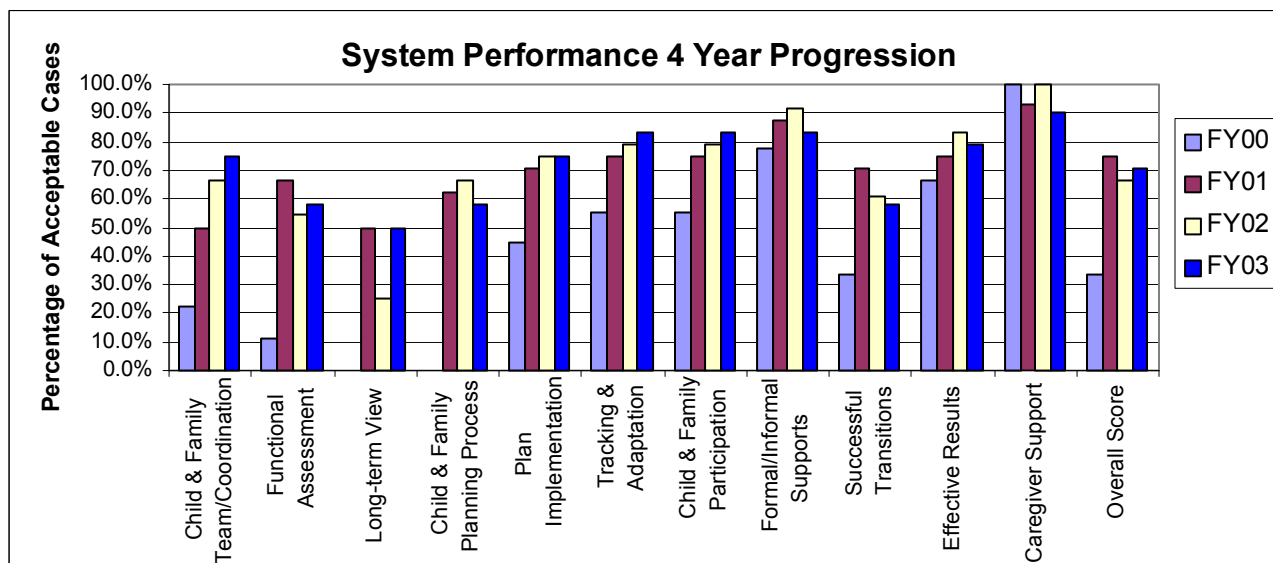
Positive results were also achieved on: "Safety" (95.8%), "Satisfaction" (95.8%), "Physical Well-being" (95.8%), "Emotional/Behavioral Well-being" (83.3%) and "Learning Progress" (83.3%).

While "Learning Progress" scored well, it dropped slightly from the last year. There was a pronounced decrease in "Stability" (66.7%), "Prospects for Permanence" (54.2%) and on "Family Functioning and Resourcefulness".

Eastern Region System Performance							
	# of cases	Need Improvement	Exit Criteria 70% on Shaded indicators	Baseline	FY00	FY01	FY02
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score	Scores			
							FY03
							Current Scores
Child & Family Team/Coordination	18	6	75.0%	22.2%	50.0%	66.7%	75.0%
Functional Assessment	14	10	58.3%	11.1%	66.7%	54.2%	58.3%
Long-term View	12	12	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	50.0%
Child & Family Planning Process	14	10	58.3%	0.0%	62.5%	66.7%	58.3%
Plan Implementation	18	6	75.0%	44.4%	70.8%	75.0%	75.0%
Tracking & Adaptation	20	4	83.3%	55.6%	75.0%	79.2%	83.3%
Child & Family Participation	20	4	83.3%	55.6%	75.0%	79.2%	83.3%
Formal/Informal Supports	20	4	83.3%	77.8%	87.5%	91.7%	83.3%
Successful Transitions	14	10	58.3%	33.3%	70.8%	60.9%	58.3%
Effective Results	19	5	79.2%	66.7%	75.0%	83.3%	79.2%
Caregiver Support	18	2	90.0%	100.0%	92.0%	100.0%	90.0%
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>75.0%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>70.8%</b>

1)

- 1) ***This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable System Performance score. It is not an average of FY03 current scores.***



***Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change***

## **Statistical Analysis of System Performance Results:**

**The overall score for System Performance improved over last year to a level of 70.8% acceptable cases.**

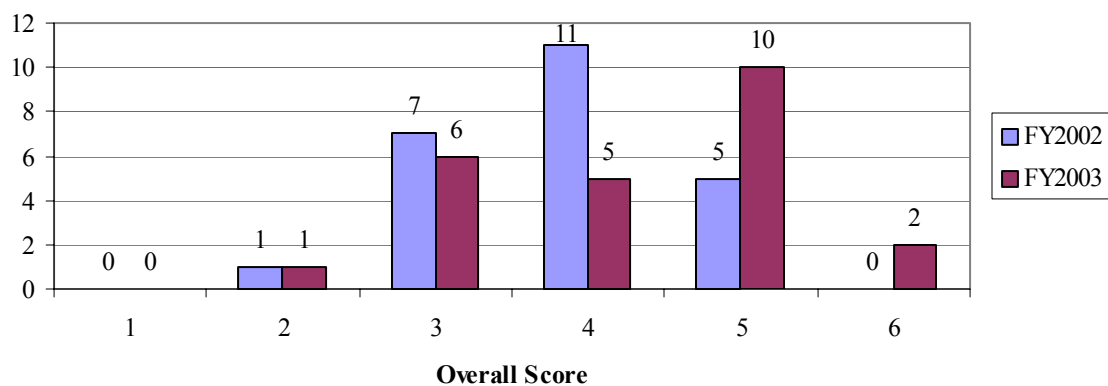
Three of the six core indicators, “Child and Family Teaming/Coordination”, “Plan Implementation” and “Tracking and Adaptation” exceeded the 70% mark for exit criteria. Only one other region had more core indicators exceed the exit criteria. This is another indication that this region is making good progress implementing the Practice Model principles into their day-to-day practice.

“Long-term View” demonstrated the greatest improvement from last year, jumping from 25% to 50%. Other indicators that showed improvement were “Child and Family Team/Coordination” (75%), “Functional Assessment” (58.3%), “Tracking and Adaptation” (83.3%) and “Child and Family Participation” (83.3%).

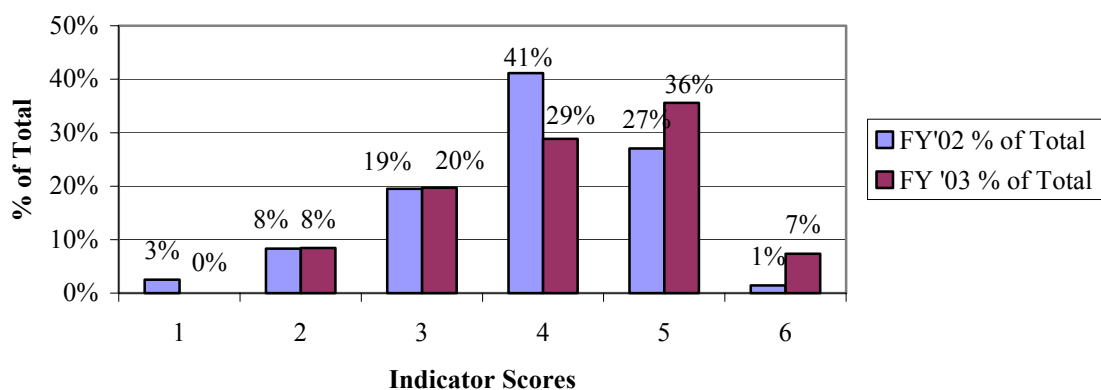
Other indicators that scored well were “Caregiver Support” (90%) and “Formal and Informal Supports” (83.3%). While some of the System Performance indicators improved since last year, there were as many indicators that declined. Examples include “Child and Family Planning Process” (58.3%), “Successful Transitions” (58.3%) and “Effective Results” (79.2%). A bright spot however is noted that none of these declining indicators dropped significantly, as was seen in the Child Status indicators.

Comparing the overall scores between 2003 and 2002 shows minor improvements in the number of unacceptable vs. acceptable scores. The greatest improvement was in the distribution of the scores. Also, there were the same or fewer “partially unacceptable” (3s) and “minimally acceptable” (4s) and more “substantially acceptable” (5s) and “optimal” (6s) scores when compared to last year. Please refer to the charts that follow which illustrate this point:

**FY2003 Eastern Region QCR  
Distribution of System Performance Overall Scores**



**FY2003 Eastern Region QCR  
Distribution of System Performance Indicator Scores**





## ANALYSIS OF DATA

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### RESULTS BY CASE TYPE AND PERMANENCY GOALS

We found that there were no substantial differences in the results when comparing foster care cases with home-based cases. 12 of the 17 foster care cases had an acceptable overall System Performance (70.6%), and 5 of the 7 home-based cases passed (71.4%).

We note there were only “PSS” or “court-ordered” home-based cases in the sample because there was only one family preservation case and only five voluntary cases in the entire region at the time the sample was pulled.

Case Type	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
Foster Care	17	12	71%
Home-based	7	5	71%

Reunification cases scored lower than other cases. Four of the seven cases (57%) with a goal of “Return Home” had acceptable results. Whereas, cases with other permanency goals scored no less than 67%. Of the three reunification cases with unacceptable results, one was a home-based case and two were foster care cases.

There was one case each with a goal of “Remain Home”, “Independent Living”, “Guardianship”, and “Permanent Foster Care” that performed below expectations, none of the cases with an “Adoption” goal.

Goal	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance	Average Overall System Perform. Score
Adoption	4	4	100%	4.5
Guardianship	3	2	67%	4.3
Independent Living	3	2	67%	4.3
Permanent Foster Care	3	2	67%	4
Remain Home	4	3	75%	4.5
Return Home	7	4	57%	4

The three cases where the permanency goal was return home and system performance scored unacceptable also had unacceptable scores in the core indicators of Functional Assessment, Long-Term View, Planning, Plan Implementation. Two of the three cases

also were unacceptable in Tracking and Adaptation. In two of the three cases there was a well-defined and functioning team. Only two cases stories have been returned, but in those two cases the functional assessments didn't have complete information about the "family" where the child was going to be living. It also appears that in both cases the Long-Term View was hindered because of lack of a clear plan of transitioning the child home. In Planning it appears that the cases suffered from a lack of the team developing the plans; therefore, the buy-in amongst the members was not there.

## RESULTS BY AGE OF TARGET CHILD

Children 6 to 12 were far more likely to have an unacceptable score for System Performance, as shown below.

Age	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
0 to 5	3	3	100%
6 to 12	11	6	55%
13+	10	8	80%

## RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caseload size doesn't appear to impact performance whereas worker experience does.

### Caseload

We found little difference in the effect of caseload on the scoring, with those caseworkers having less than below 17 cases passing System Performance 71% of the time and those caseworkers with more than 17 passing 67% of the time. We also note that for this year, no other region had lower caseloads and only one region had the same caseload size. It is likely that part of the reason for Eastern's success is that caseloads are generally kept within manageable levels.

Caseload Size	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
16 cases or less	21	15	71%
17 cases or more	3	2	67%

### Worker Experience

In addition, cases of more experienced workers perform better, as the table below shows.

<b>Months of Caseworker Experience</b>	<b># in sample</b>	<b># Acceptable System Performance</b>	<b>% Acceptable System Performance</b>
12 months or less	5	3	60%
13 months or more	19	14	74%

Last year's review showed the same results, leading us to believe that if the region could reduce turnover and retain their workers at a higher level, they will see an increase in System Performance scores.

### **RESULTS BY OFFICES AND SUPERVISORS**

The following table displays the overall case results by office and supervisors. Despite the high turnover rate in the Castle Dale office, they have had all of their cases pass System Performance for two years in a row. In addition, the Roosevelt and Monticello offices achieved 100% acceptable System Performance on their cases. We also point out that the Ute Family Services office had two of three cases (67%) pass System Performance this year, a great improvement from last year's one of five cases (20%).

With most of the supervisors having three cases or less, it is difficult to make any statements about a team's performance. However, it is worth pointing out that Paul Avery's team in Price had five cases with 80% passing System Performance and Paul Smith's team in Moab had four cases with 75% passing System Performance.

Case#	Child	Supervisor	office	Child Status	System Performance	System Performance By Office	By Office last year	System Performance By Supervisor	
03E05	Allredge	Shawn Jack	Blanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 Acceptable		Shawn Jack	1 Acceptable
03E14	Grisham	Shawn Jack	Blanding	Acceptable	Unacceptable	1 Unacceptable			1 Unacceptable
						50%	100%		50%
03E12	Holt	Mike Godfrey	Castle Dale	Acceptable	Acceptable	2 Acceptable		Mike Godfrey	2 Acceptable
03E22	Williams	Mike Godfrey	Castle Dale	Acceptable	Acceptable	0 Unacceptable			0 Unacceptable
						100%	100%		100%
03E11	Nickle	Paul Smith	Moab	Acceptable	Acceptable	3 Acceptable		Paul Smith	3 Acceptable
03E15	Jones	Paul Smith	Moab	Acceptable	Unacceptable	1 Unacceptable			1 Unacceptable
03E19	Domenick	Paul Smith	Moab	Acceptable	Acceptable	75%			75%
03E24	Mcdonald	Paul Smith	Moab	Acceptable	Acceptable		100%	Al Young	1 Acceptable
03E20	Staats	Al Young	Monticello	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 Acceptable			0 Unacceptable
						0 Unacceptable			100%
						100%	0%	Boni Seals	0 Acceptable
03E18	Rea	Boni Seals	Price	Acceptable	Unacceptable	4 Acceptable			2 Unacceptable
03E23	Chavez	Boni Seals	Price	Acceptable	Unacceptable	3 Unacceptable			0%
03E01	Christensen	Paul Avery	Price	Acceptable	Acceptable	57%		Paul Avery	4 Acceptable
03E06	Bailey	Paul Avery	Price	Acceptable	Acceptable				1 Unacceptable
03E07	Nunez	Paul Avery	Price	Acceptable	Acceptable				80%
03E09	Anderson	Paul Avery	Price	Acceptable	Acceptable			George Glines	1 Acceptable
03E10	Warax	Paul Avery	Price	Acceptable	Unacceptable		100%		0 Unacceptable
03E21	Krogman	George Glines	Roosevelt	Acceptable	Acceptable	3 Acceptable			100%
03E08	Stevens	Janet Brown	Roosevelt	Acceptable	Acceptable	0 Unacceptable		Janet Brown	2 Acceptable
03E13	Schaubroeck	Janet Brown	Roosevelt	Acceptable	Acceptable	100%	50%		0 Unacceptable
03E02	Tapoof	Betty Ulwelling	Ute	Acceptable	Acceptable	2 Acceptable			100%
03E03	Cuch	Betty Ulwelling	Ute	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 Unacceptable		Betty Ulwelling	2 Acceptable
03E04	Montes	Betty Ulwelling	Ute	Acceptable	Unacceptable	67%	20%		1 Unacceptable
03E16	Melo	Lynn Bigelow	Vernal	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 Acceptable			67%
03E17	Jackson	Matt Watkins	Vernal	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	1 Unacceptable		Lynn Bigelow	1 Acceptable
						50%	75%		0 Unacceptable
									100%
								Matt Watkins	0 Acceptable
									1 Unacceptable
FY2002				FY2003					0%
Overall System Performance by sub-area				Overall System Performance by sub-area					
	Southern Area = EM, EB, EO	Northern Area = ER, EV, EU	Western Area = EC, EP	Southern Area = EM, EB, EO	Northern Area = ER, EV, EU	Western Area = EC, EP			
	83.3%	46.2%	100.0%	71.4%	75.0%	66.7%			

## Content Analysis

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Since the region exceeded the exit criteria for three of the six core domains, our content analysis focuses on Functional Assessment, Long Term View and Child and Family Planning Process, the three that still need improvement. We reviewed the case stories that have come in to OSR at this writing. OSR analyzed the cases that were unacceptable on System Performance (1-3) to identify some of the practice issues and system barriers to be addressed. The issues that leave room for improvement include:

### **Functional Assessment**

Of the twenty-four cases, there were 6 scores of “4”, 9 scores of “3” and 1 score of “2”, suggesting that the region is still struggling with this concept. As we looked at these 16 cases we found that they were distributed among all areas of the region, the children in these cases were both latency and adolescent aged, the cases had been open for varying lengths of time and were both foster care and home-based cases. There were no easy answers to why these cases struggled with this principle. Every case that scored unacceptably on System Performance also scored unacceptably on this indicator. There were two common themes for the cases that scored a “3”:

- **Team’s not developing the assessment or synthesizing the information.** In one case a highly detailed assessment was done as part of the psychological assessment. As the reviewers note, “It was not clear that all members of the team had access to important information or were incorporating that information in the planning and assessment process.”
- **Missing underlying issues or not identifying underlying issues. There may be information for the child but other key family members issues have not been adequately assessed.** As an example, the history of a family with a history of violence and child abuse was not included in the functional assessment. The reviewers further state, “There was no effort to determine the underlying reasons for the sexually reactive behavior of the children and their continued aggression.”

**Recommendation:** Supervisors monitor performance in functional assessment by asking the question, “Do we know enough to achieve the case goal?” and “Are there issues with other family members that might impact the child and do we know enough to address those concerns?” on every case.

### **Long-Term View**

There were no “1’s” or “6’s” given this year. The rest of the scores were evenly divided with 6 cases scoring in each category of 2 through 5. Five of the eight cases that were reviewed stated the following reason for long-term view not being acceptable:

- **No clear plan or strategy on what it takes to see a transition through.** In several cases the reviewers state that there was no clear plan in place to accomplish a transition or what the team needs in order to ensure success. To illustrate, in one case a girl struggled most of her life with behavioral problems that her mother couldn’t control. Those behaviors have improved greatly and she is set to be reunified with her mother. However, some of the key steps to

reunification, such as requesting an Inter-state Compact agreement, have not been initiated. Also, her move to a new school has not been addressed. The reviewers state, “Some of the team is aware of the upcoming transition, but have neglected to design a clear plan to navigate the transition successfully.”

The other few cases suggested a **lack of a “shared vision”** or the **link to inadequate functional assessments**. If the functional assessment lacks important information about family/child functioning, resources (formal and informal), service needs, or fails to identify underlying issues, it will be difficult to develop a good plan to insure long-term success for the family and independence from child welfare.

**Recommendation:** As supervisors discuss the cases with their workers, the questions that might be raised would be “do we know where the case is headed and why?” “Are we taking the necessary steps to help the child/family be successful in the long-run?”

### **Planning Process**

The planning process indicator was divided into, two “2’s”, eight “3’s”, eight “4’s”, five “5’s” and one “6”. We reviewed five of the cases rated unacceptably in planning. Of those five cases, the most frequently mentioned area needing improvement was:

- **Plans are not adapting to changing child and family situations.** In one case the child had experienced many changes in placement and school in a relative short time. This led to many urgent situations to try and address his new circumstances. As the reviewers point out, “There are key decisions made without family team meetings, and critical assessment information is not consistently incorporated into planning. For example, the service plan itself, was unchanged since December, although many important changes have occurred.”

**Recommendation:** The region may want to review those cases where this was mentioned and see if it was a lack of knowing how to amend plans on SAFE or have a discussion with the workers on the importance of changing plans when critical things happen in the life of the child and family. Supervisors need to also ask, “Is the direction the case is going based on regular and effective team meetings?”

## **Summary of Interviews with Community Stakeholders and Focus Groups with DCFS Staff Eastern Region QCR FY2003**

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This year Linda Bayless from the Child Welfare Group and Ray Winger from the Office of Services Review conducted the interviews. Representatives of Navajo Social Services and Northern Ute Social Services were interviewed. In addition, there were focus groups of workers and supervisors throughout the region, the training team and the administration team.

### **Focus Groups**

#### Strengths

- Workers genuinely care about the children and families served, and are committed to reuniting the families. Engaging the families well.
- In the small communities of this region, workers see their clients in day-to-day activities, so they have incentive to maintain good working relationships with the families and the community partners.
- Have good relationships with the tribes.
- Teaming was identified by staff throughout the region as their greatest strength in the practice model.
- Families and community partners are more involved in the planning and problem resolutions.
- Mentoring is working well, a new employee related that they had a mentor from the first day and had a specific mentoring plan.
- Are able to maintain DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) safety for team meetings. Having separate meetings until the family is reunited.

#### Challenges

- In many offices, the majority of their cases in foster care are adolescents who are delinquent. These children are hard to find homes for and foster parents are trained to deal with their issues. Judges are ordering custody for truancy or other reasons unrelated to abuse or neglect.
- Workers need to be told they are doing a good job, the more often get criticism that recognition for the good that they do. They need some way to be rewarded.
- Partners are not being held accountable; they need to have the same level of accountability and responsibility.
- There were some reports that Mental Health providers are hesitant to share any information, even when the families sign releases.
- Many of the Mental Health providers are overloaded because they have vacancies that they haven't been able to fill. In some areas, they are seeing a 30-day waiting list for even the initial appointments.

### Resources Needed

- Need more foster homes (especially Native American), structured and residential placements within the region.
- More substance abuse and domestic violence treatment for both children and adults, including teen drug courts.
- More Independent Living classes, homes or apartments.

### Practice Improvement Opportunities

- Foster families need to be supported better by the system, especially when false allegations are made by children trying to triangulate and manipulate. Workers need better training on how to deal with foster families.
- Staff consistently identified Functional Assessment as the area where they need the most work to improve. Some see the Functional Assessment as just another requirement that is redundant.
- Many felt that the focus of the residential screenings needs to include not only least restrictive, but also most appropriate for their needs. It was stated that too often when the focus is least restrictive, that just sets them up for failure and greater instability.
- Long-Term View and Transition Planning need more attention in the coming year.
- Strengthening the flow of the Functional Assessment process from the CPS services through the ongoing services.
- Some requested better communication from the region administration so that everyone hears of decisions at the same time and not through the grapevine.

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

### Strengths

- Good positive communications with supervisors.
- Inter Government Agreement meetings quarterly have been a good way to address policy issues. The state has been open to collaborating.
- They are invited to attend Child and Family team meetings and are provided with court documents. They can appear in person when necessary but prefer telephonically.
- Have a good overall relationship with DCFS.
- INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA) conference helps educate caseworkers on cultural and ICWA issues.
- It has been very helpful to meet with region staff to iron out issues and concerns, especially when they were able to agree to a compromise in differences between the Family Unity Model and the Practice Model.

### Concerns?

- Most line workers aren't as familiar with ICWA as they should be.
- Many Utah workers are not aware that Navajo Social Services have foster homes and certified adoption homes that meet all of the requirements for safe and stable



homes. There is a tug-of-war to place a child back onto the reservation. There is an image that the Navajo Nation isn't a good place.

- They would like to address entitlements for children, such as financial adoption subsidies when they lose IV-E entitlements, and would like to address this issue in a way similar to THE INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN (ICPC).
- A concern is that a lot of the work between the state and the Ute tribe doesn't have a lot of formalized documentation to guide it, the tribal agreement with the state is often too vague, doesn't specify who is responsible to pay specific costs. There is a need for more written details.
- An unknown for the Ute Social Services is Child Protective Services; this needs to be shored up. They had a position but they got burned out and now the responsibilities are fragmented. Writing a proposal for funding from Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Need a transitional living home for Ute tribal members who come home from state custody but have nowhere to live on the reservation. It could be like the independent living program in DCFS. He is requesting budge for the property and hopes that the state can provide the staffing and the program.

What do they need?

- Biggest issue is getting the caseworkers throughout the state trained. State staff, especially Savania have been good to work with, they have a lot of contact with her. Her knowledge needs to get all the way down to the caseworkers.
- More access to legal documents, medical and Mental Health assessments and updates.
- Navajo Social Services would like to staff cases with workers on a regular basis like they do in New Mexico. On a quarterly basis they could go office by office to meet with workers who have Native American cases and staff face-to-face and resolve issues and concerns. They could also attend team meetings that were arranged to coincide with these visits.
- The Ute tribe would like to meet and review long-term cases so that they can make final decisions.
- Would like to see opportunities for children in foster care have the opportunity to interact with peers and relatives to maintain their culture.
- Would like to see a re-writing of the Tribal Agreement to be more specific and to address IV-E and Foster Care.
- There is a peer parenting program worker that is available only to the foster care cases, would like to see all cases be able to access these services.
- Would like to clarify who has a specific responsibility so that people will know their responsibility and who supervises the tribal workers.

## Exit Conference Notes, May 16, 2003

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### STRENGTHS:

- Outstanding structured foster homes
- Creative use of resources
- Continuity and quality of social worker-client relationship
- Good teaming and development of the team throughout the life of the case
- Frequency of team meetings and visits to the child
- Adaptation of services matched to the needs of the child
- Moab Drug Court is filling a gap and achieving good outcomes
- Strong use of families and informal supports, good maintenance of family ties
- Change of mindset in the system
- Networking of the support system, sense of community
- New worker was very skilled, good mentoring and/or training
- Reasonableness of the arrangement of services in the least intrusive manner
- Building of the partnership with the Frontiers Project through Mental Health
- Willingness, strength of families
- Excellent support from the school system
- Child felt supported and able to express his needs and desires
- Strong relationships with legal partners
- High level of commitment for the Child and Families immediate needs
- Saw good follow-up on recommendations from last year
- Many examples of good attention to their involvement in school and activities
- Saw examples of good attention to safety
- Good management of the case files, easy to find needed documents
- Seeing examples of more difficult tasks such as good Functional Assessments
- Therapist is acting as a real team member and drawing on the resources of caseworker
- Everyone on the team knew the team and identifying themselves as team members
- Accurate application of treatment
- Very impressed with the intimate knowledge of the cases by the supervisors, on the spot help in the case
- CASA volunteer was impressive in their advocacy
- Willingness of partner agencies to participate
- Partner agencies are coming to DCFS for the services
- Review was organized effectively and efficiently by the region despite the distances involved
- Morale seems to be a real plus, like the work they are doing, have a good positive office environment
- Increased attention to the issues of Native American families
- A lot of support by Regional Administration to the caseworkers

- Cultural awareness allows us tap into the tribal resources

#### PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

- More effective utilization and involvement of team members
- Still a need to involve the teachers and school counselors
- More attention to the single point of accountability, can't let any one team member dominate, with a particular emphasis on the therapists having a role where they can fit into the team
- Utilize the clinical consultants to assess current needs using past assessments
- Need post adoptive training and support
- Attention to the sequencing of case activities and using the results of work in one area to develop the next area
- Saw a case where a father was totally excluded, need to maintain connections to difficult family members
- Occasionally families are treated as if rights terminated when the reunification is terminated
- Not making assumptions that those who need the information have the information
- Clarification of differences between staffing and teaming, using techniques to insure the participation of the family, insure the process is family driven
- Need more available expertise in dealing with DV and substance abuse
- Develop ownership of caseworkers for transferred cases
- Better development of information on services available and rights after achieving guardianship, in a written format
- Make clear to the team what the placement goals are for the child, good communication for key issues
- Don't give up on key team members if it appears difficult to engage them in the team
- Coach a family instead of guiding and directing
- Responsibility to gather information when not readily given, ask for it when needed
- Better planning in transitions
- Combination of a big picture and Long-term view
- Avoid getting stuck in the here and now and keep looking to the Long-term needs and how to get there
- Develop a relationship with the MH providers that they are comfortable with confidentiality issues
- Fundamental need to internalize the basic steps of practice and assessment, some steps are essential to successful practice
- Sharing of information between the department and the therapist, more training for MH professionals of the benefits to children from permanence resolution

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Additional focus on a full understanding Functional Assessments, basic misunderstanding of the relative importance of the form
- Empower the mentoring program to make the application of the principle a reality, translating training into practice

- Contest for a creative display of practice that creates a common language such as “DCFS Monopoly” that is judged by the families
- State disseminate and/or create a brochure that details post-guardian and post-adoption services, funding and rights
- Continue to engage the community to capitalize on the progress they have made
- Look at each case to say, “Whose team is this?”
- Help understand the relationship between stability and permanence, emphasis on the relationships
- Training to improve accessibility of DCFS resources to tribal cases

#### SYSTEM BARRIERS:

- Timely transfer of school records for children in custody
- Availability of mental health services
- Budget/Funding issues for both the division and their partners
- Continuity of care, lack of services and resources within the area
- Dissemination of information from Regional experts on specialized areas of treatment like Domestic Violence, Post Adoption, Substance Abuse
- Distances required to manage cases
- Legal resources are experiencing high caseloads and extreme distances